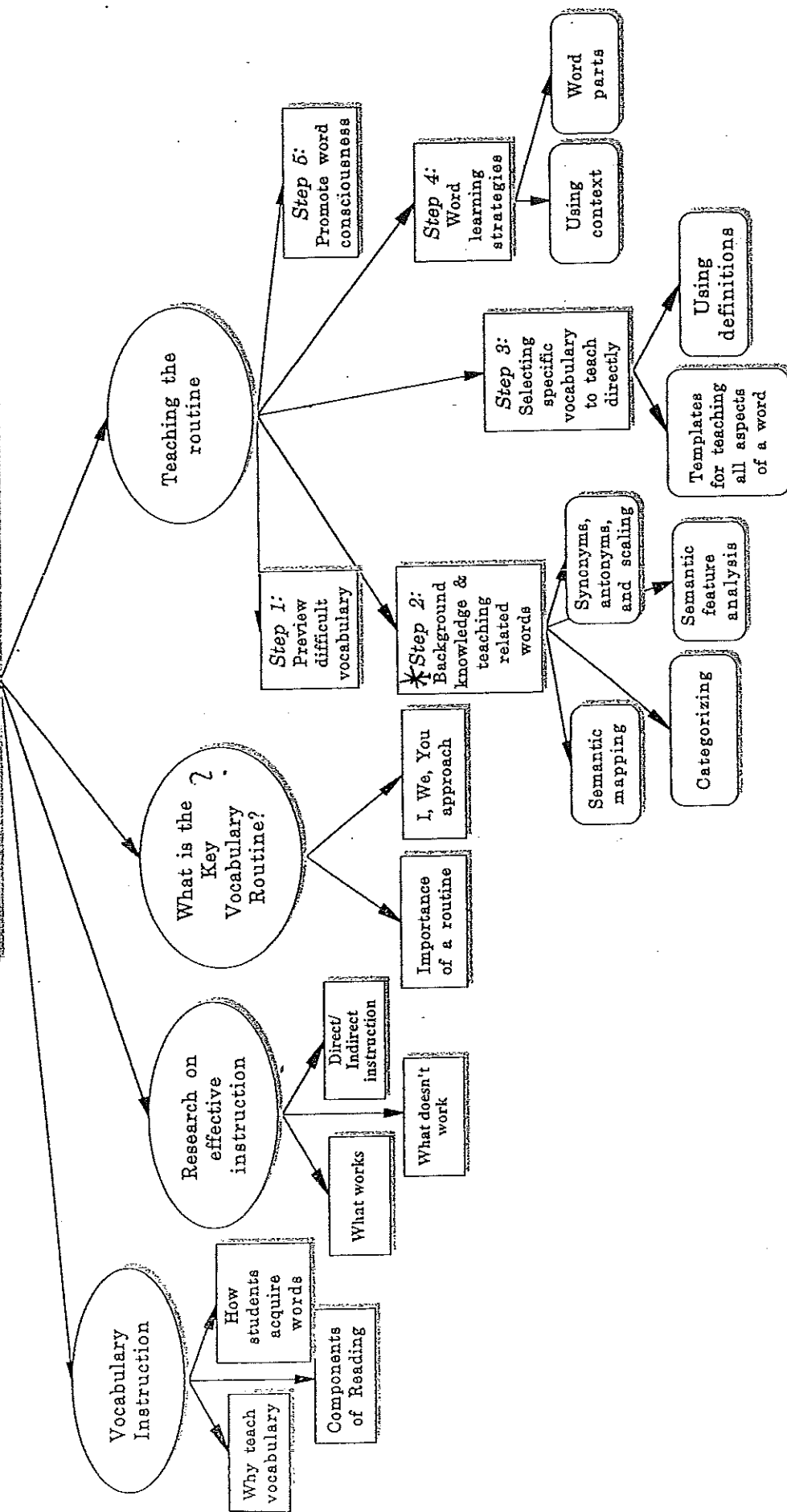


# Key Vocabulary Routine



## The Key Vocabulary Routine

### 1. Preview for difficult vocabulary

- Identify problematic words, phrases, figurative language
- Generate a previewing list
- Provide background knowledge about the words to aid in comprehension while reading

### 2. Use activities that connect vocabulary to background knowledge and related words

- Categorizing
- Semantic Mapping
- Semantic Feature Analysis
- Scaling

### 3. Select specific words to teach in-depth

- Identify a small set of key content words
- Teach all aspects of the words
- Develop user-friendly definitions

### 4. Identify opportunities to teach word learning strategies

- Use of context to determine word meaning
- Use of word parts to determine word meaning

### 5. Promote word consciousness

Another good resource for determining which words to preview is the students themselves. Ask them to skim the passage and make a list of words they do not know. When students do this activity in small, cooperative groups, each group generates a list, and the teacher generates a master previewing list based on the input from the groups.

### Activity 1: Generate a Sample Preview List

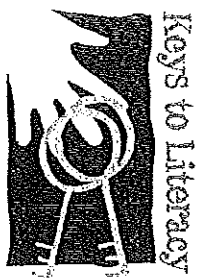
*Directions: Using a reading selection from your classroom, create a previewing list of at least 20 words and phrases. Remember, you can include any words or phrases that may affect comprehension, not just words that you will teach in-depth.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_
16. \_\_\_\_\_
17. \_\_\_\_\_
18. \_\_\_\_\_

# Word Knowledge Checklist

[illegible]

Adapted from: Beck, I.L., McKeown, M.G., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: The Guilford Press.

[illegible]

Ms. Welschoff's class, ConVal Regional School District  
Peterborough, NH

©Joan Sedita, [www.keystoliteracy.com](http://www.keystoliteracy.com)

**Resource Tip:** *Word Web* ([www.wordwebonline.com](http://www.wordwebonline.com)) is a free dictionary and thesaurus software program that can be accessed online and can also be downloaded onto a computer desktop to be used without the Internet. When a vocabulary word or phrase, including figurative language such as *raining cats and dogs*, is entered into the search feature, definitions, synonyms, and antonyms are provided. For some words, direct links to online encyclopedia entries are also provided. It is a simple tool for providing instant access to previewing information about words.

## Activity 2: Practice Previewing

### Part 1

Directions: Use the Word Knowledge Checklist to rate your knowledge of these words before you read the sample research passage.				
Word	Know it well, can explain it use it	Know something about it, can relate it to a situation	Have seen or heard the word	Do not know the word
encounter				
context				
phonologically				
orthographically				
lexical				
inferential				
initiate				
cues				
vague				
incidental				
contextual clues				
morphological				
acquire				

Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002

Part 3

*Directions: Read the sample research passage below and answer the questions.*

"For children, as well as adults, learning an unfamiliar word begins when it is encountered in an oral or written language context and when understanding of that word matters to the listener or reader. If a word is encoded phonologically (and, in written contexts, orthographically) but no lexical representation is available, an inferential process is initiated such that cues from the immediate context of the new word are used to assign some sort of meaning, if only a vague association with the topic. This process is called *incidental word learning*. It is the primary way that people, regardless of age, learn new words. Incidental word learning, which depends on both contextual clues and morphological analysis, is the primary means through which students acquire new vocabulary."

Adapted from: Carlisle, J.F. (2007). Fostering morphological processing, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. In R.K. Wagner, A.E. Muse, & K.R. Tannenbaum (Eds.). *Vocabulary acquisition: Implications for reading comprehension*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Was your comprehension of the passage improved because words were previewed?

---

Are there any other words you or your peers may be unsure of that should be added to the previewing list?

---

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---

---

Part 4

*Directions: Review the Word Knowledge Checklist and determine if you can now change the rating for any of the words.*

Part 2

*Directions: Work in small groups and discuss the meaning of each word. Then answer the questions.*

Did the discussion clarify or broaden your understanding of any of the words? Explain.

---

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For words about which you were unsure, did the discussion help build enough background knowledge so you will not "stumble" over the words that were unknown to you?

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What can the instructor do to provide you with enough knowledge about the unfamiliar words so you can successfully read the passage?

---

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---



### Activity 3: Practice Planning

*Directions: Use the suggestions in this chapter to develop a previewing lesson plan for a previewing list. The following template can be used for this purpose.*

Class period: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) covered: \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Selection: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Words to Preview

- |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____  | 14. _____ |
| 2. _____  | 15. _____ |
| 3. _____  | 16. _____ |
| 4. _____  | 17. _____ |
| 5. _____  | 18. _____ |
| 6. _____  | 19. _____ |
| 7. _____  | 20. _____ |
| 8. _____  | 21. _____ |
| 9. _____  | 22. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 23. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 24. _____ |
| 12. _____ | 25. _____ |
| 13. _____ |           |

Activities I will use to provide familiarity with these words and to make connections to existing student background knowledge:

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*Part 1*

*Directions: Complete a brainstorm mapping activity for the word humor.*

humor

Part 2

*Directions: Make connections between the words and generate meaningful categories.  
You may also add new words.*

humor

Part 3

*Directions: Answer the questions.*

Did some of the words that were brainstormed become category words?

---

---

Were there words that could not be grouped with other words to form a category?

---

---

Once the categories were generated, were you able to brainstorm additional words?

---

---

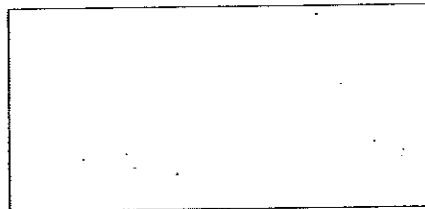
*Step 2 - The Key Vocabulary Routine*

**Activity 2: Practice Planning**

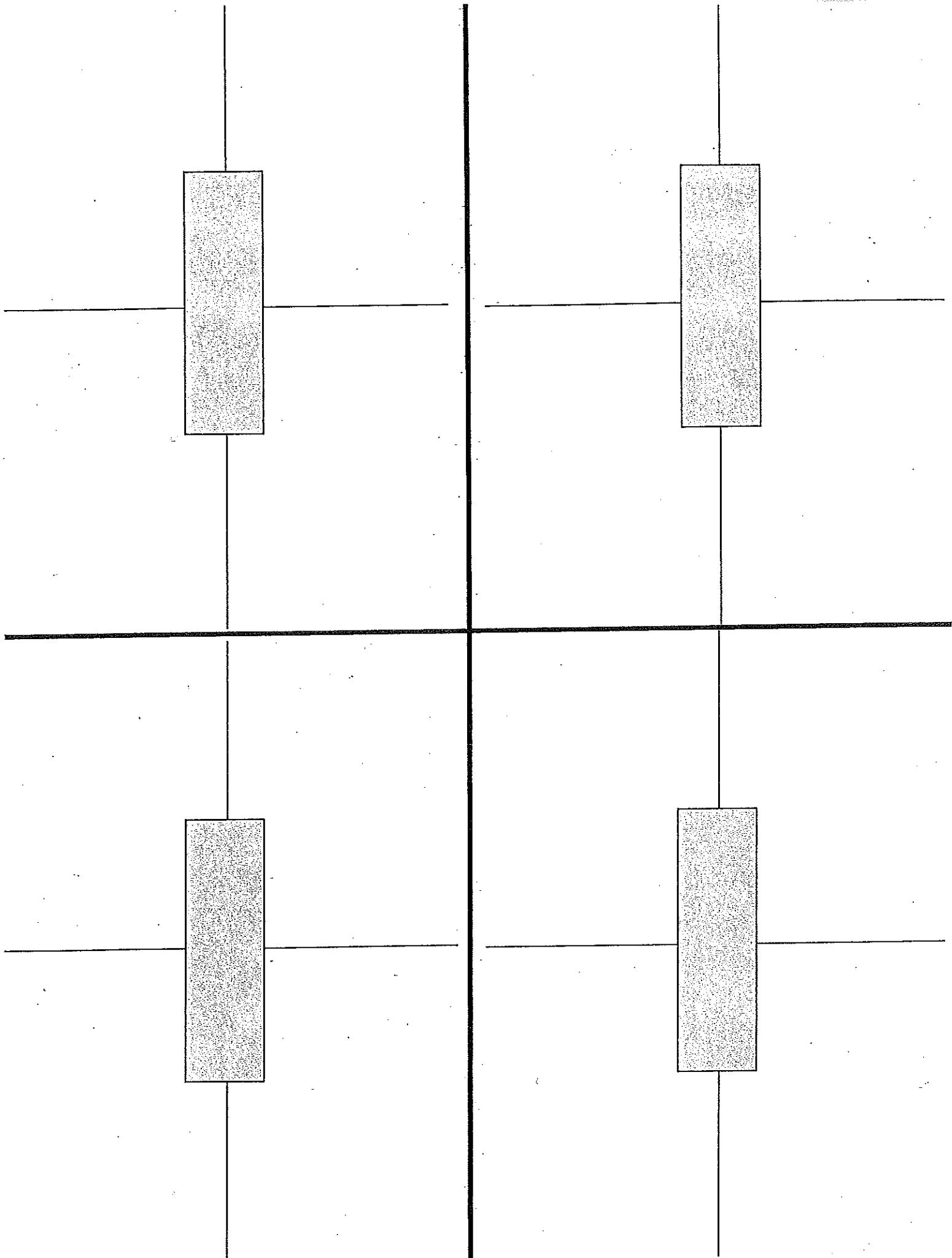
*Directions: Identify a key concept word from the list you generated in the previewing activity or from a unit of study you teach. Use this word to develop a semantic mapping activity. Use the space below for the brainstorming map and the categories, or use a separate piece of paper.*

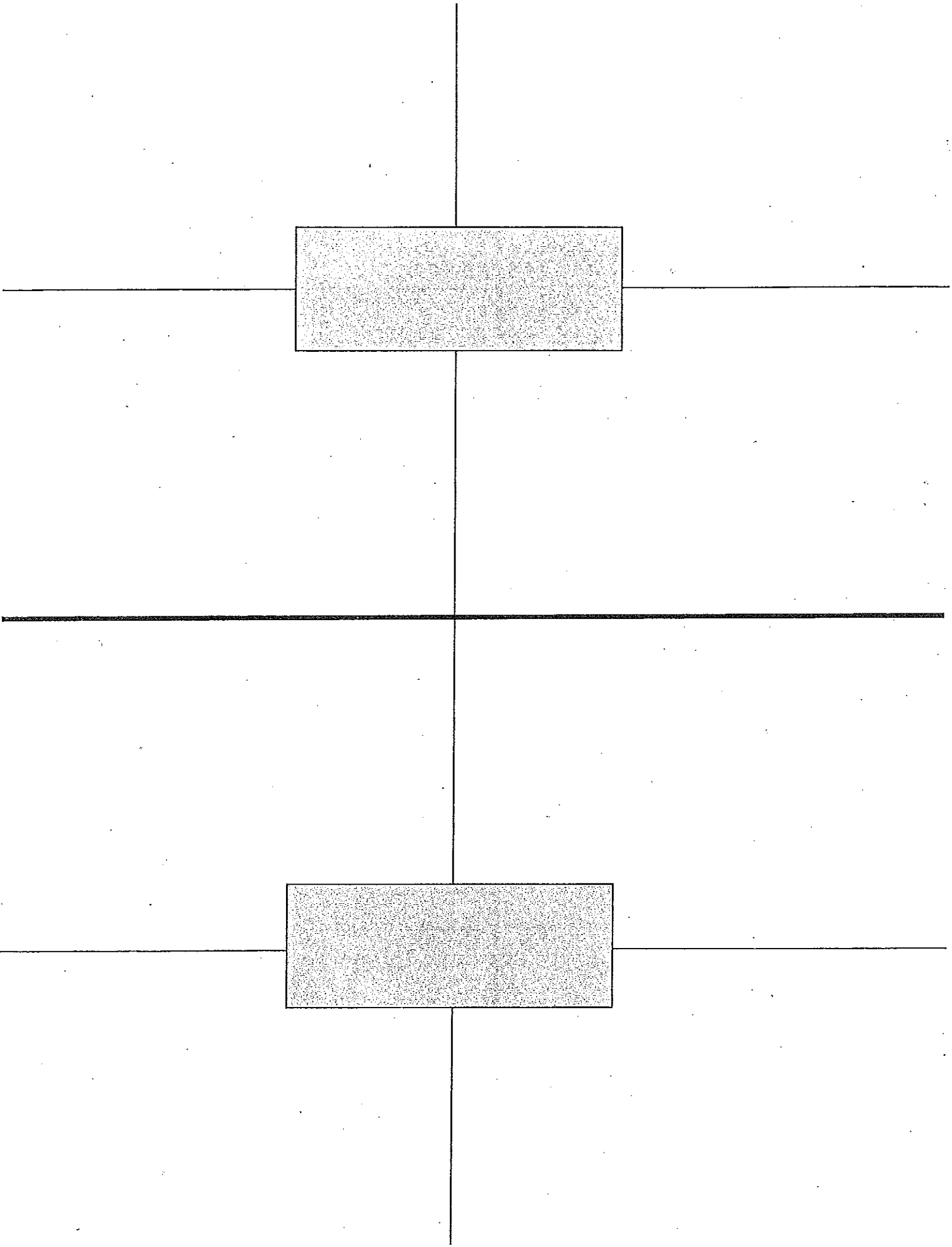
**Technology Tip:** If a Smart Board or LCD projector and computer are available for class instruction, teachers can use mapping software such as Inspiration ([www.inspiration.com](http://www.inspiration.com)) or Smart Ideas ([www2.smarttech.com/st/en-US/Products/SMART+Ideas/](http://www2.smarttech.com/st/en-US/Products/SMART+Ideas/)) to help generate a semantic map. Software of this type enables the user to type in words while brainstorming, and then easily move the words around on the page during the categorizing stage of the activity.

# Semantic Mapping



Adapted from: Heimlich, J.E., & Pittelman, S.D. (1986). *Semantic mapping: Classroom applications*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.





*Step 2 - The Key Vocabulary Routine*

*Figure E.*

Word List		
apple	asparagus	banana
broccoli	donut	grape
orange	pear	spinach
string bean	chocolate	



### Activity 3: Practice Categorizing

*Directions: Review the list of words related to Egypt and generate possible categories. Then answer the questions.*

#### Words

Amulet: charm worn to bring good luck

Anubis: god of the afterlife

Book of the Dead: a collection of spells/prayers to help with the passage to the afterlife

Canopic jars: containers for the internal organs of an embalmed body

Cartouche: oval shape surrounding an inscription of a royal name

Cataracts: steep rapids in a river

Delta: where the water leaves the river and enters the sea

Giza: the place where the pyramids were built

Hatshepsut: first female ruler of the New Kingdom of Egypt

Imhotep: the architect who designed the first pyramid for King Zoser

Inundation: annual flooding of the Nile

Kush: country to the south of Egypt

Luxor: the place of royal cemeteries

Mastaba: rectangular shaped tomb with sloping sides and a flat top

Menes: king who first unified upper and lower Egypt

Natron: a mineral/salt used in mummification

Obelisk: a tall and thin four-sided stone pillar

Papyrus: water reed used for making paper

Pharaoh: title for the rulers of Egypt

Ra: the first, most important Egyptian god

Red Sea: sea that borders Egypt on the east

Sarcophagus: a stone coffin

Scarab: an amulet in the form of a beetle

Scribes: professional writers or record keepers

Shroud: a cloth in which a dead body is wrapped

Sphinx: a statue with the head of a human and the body of a lion

Tributary: a small river that feeds into the Nile

#### Options for Categories

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Was there disagreement about possible categories or whether a word belonged under a certain category? If so, how did the discussion help you to think more closely about the subtleties and importance of context for any of the words?

---

---

Can you add more words to the categories related to the topic?

---

---

What other interesting words came up during group discussion?

---

---

### Activity 4: Practice Planning

*Directions: Use the list of words you generated in the previewing activity or identify words from a unit of study you teach to develop a categorizing activity.*

#### Words

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

#### Options for Categories

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Semantic Feature Analysis

Semantic feature analysis (Baldwin et al., 1981; Johnson & Pearson, 1984) is another well-researched activity that helps students recognize similarities and differences between related words. A relational matrix, or grid, is used to show how related words are alike and different. When a semantic feature matrix is completed, it provides a good overall view of concept features. Figure F highlights the steps for a semantic feature analysis activity.

# Categorizing

Words


## Options for Categories

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity 5: Practice Semantic Feature Analysis

*Directions: Complete the semantic feature analysis grid below in a small group. Then answer and discuss the questions.*

	Narrow	Wide	Paved	Unpaved	For walking	For driving
path						
trail						
road						
lane						
boulevard						
freeway						
turnpike						

From: Graves, M.F. (2006). *The vocabulary book*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Was there disagreement about features for any of the words? If so, did the discussion that ensued cause you to think more closely about the complexity of meaning and the importance of context for any of the words?

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---

Can you add any words to the left column or features along the top row?

---



---

What other interesting words came up during group discussion?

---

## Activity 6: Practice Planning

<i>Directions: Identify words from the list you generated in the previewing activity or from a unit of study you teach that lend themselves to a semantic feature analysis activity.</i>						
Words	Features					

### 4. Scaling

Scaling (Moats, 2005), also described as “linear arrays” (Allen, 1999), is an activity that focuses on synonyms and antonyms. Based on a vocabulary word or pair of opposite words, a series of related words are generated along a continuum or scale. Figure H highlights the steps for a scaling activity.

## Semantic Feature Analysis

[illegible]

Adapted from: Baldwin, R.S., Ford, J.C. & Readance, J.E. (1981). Teaching word connotations: An alternative strategy. *Reading World*, 21, 103-108.  
Johnson, D.D., & Pearson, P.D. (1984). *Teaching reading vocabulary*. (2nd ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

Figure I

Example 1

Word List: Middle Ages

jester: a funny performer who provides entertainment to the king

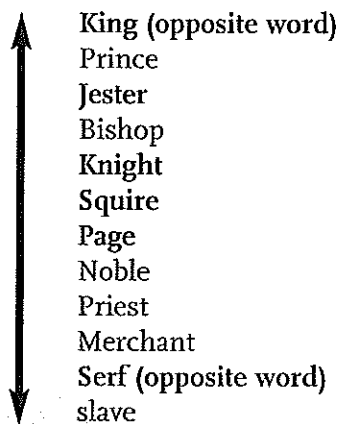
king: ruler of a kingdom

knight: fighter from a noble family

page: a boy in training to be a knight

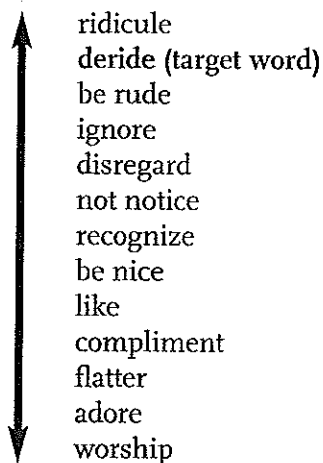
serf: a peasant who works the land owned by someone else

squire: assistant to a knight



Example 2

Target Word: deride

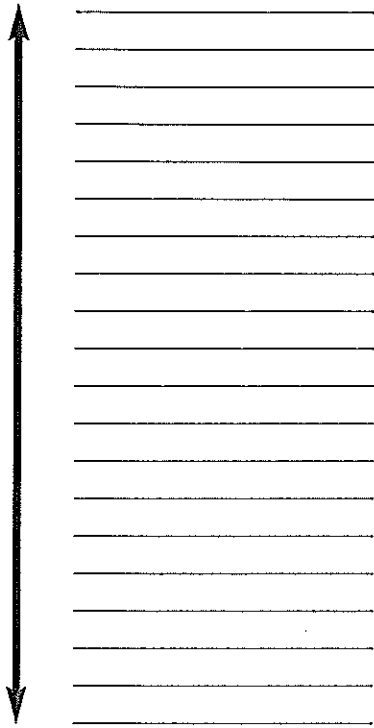


Scaling does not work for all vocabulary words, only for those that have clear opposites and for which a variety of synonyms and related words can be generated. As with the other activities in Step 2, scaling provides an excellent opportunity for rich discussion.



### Activity 8: Practice Planning

*Directions: Choose a word or words from the list of words you generated in the previewing activity or from a unit of study you teach to develop a scaling activity.*



A vertical double-headed arrow is positioned to the left of a list of 20 horizontal lines. The arrow points both upwards and downwards, indicating a range or scale for the activity.

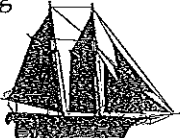
### Step 2 Summary

Semantic Mapping, Categorizing, Semantic Feature Analysis, and Scaling are four activities for learning new words by associating them with related words. These activities help students make connections between background knowledge about concepts and words associated with those concepts. They also offer opportunities for rich discussion about words.

#### Multiple Meanings for the Words *development* and *root*

development
I. Act of improving by expanding or enlarging or refining <i>"He congratulated them on their development of a plan to meet the emergency."</i> <i>"They funded research and development."</i>

Figure B

Frayer Method	Concept Word: <i>nautical</i>
<p>Define the word, include picture if possible</p> <p><i>--Related to shipping or navigation.</i></p> 	<p>List key characteristics and attributes</p> <p><i>--Associated with the ocean</i></p> <p><i>--Describes ships, sailors</i></p> <p><i>--Things that help travel over water</i></p>
<p>Example</p> <p><i>--Rigging and sails</i></p> <p><i>--Seamen</i></p> <p><i>--Rudder</i></p>	<p>Non-example</p> <p><i>--Mountains</i></p> <p><i>--Train</i></p> <p><i>--Paved roads</i></p>

Adapted from: Frayer, D.A., Frederick, W.D., & Klausmeier, H.J. (1969). *A schema for testing the level of concept mastery* (Technical Report No. 16). Madison: University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Center for Education Research.

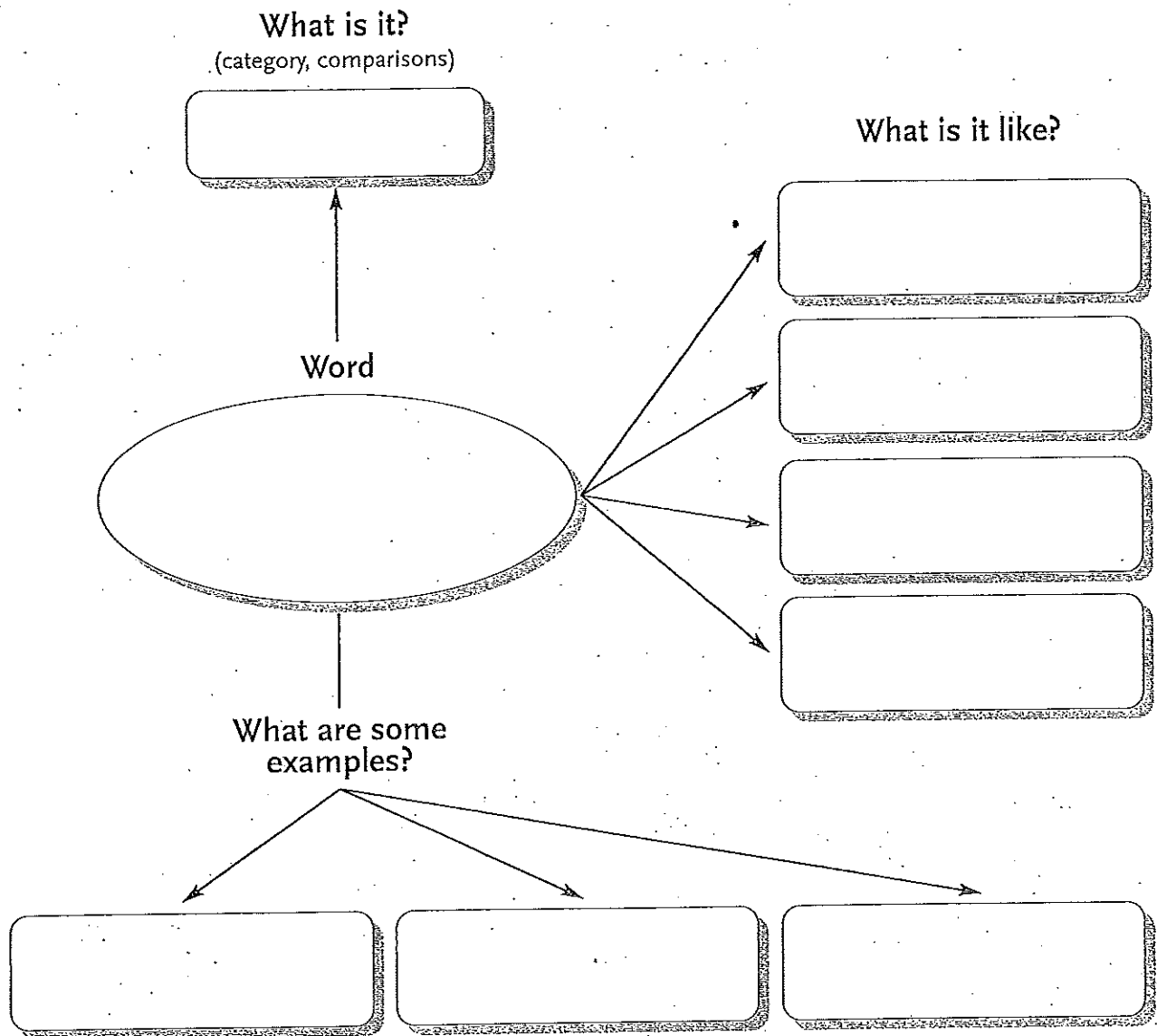
# Frayer Method

Concept Word: \_\_\_\_\_

Define the word, include picture if possible	List key characteristics and attributes
Example	Non-example

Adapted from: Frayer, D.A., Frederick, W.D., & Klausmeier, H.J. (1969). *A schema for testing the level of concept mastery* (Technical Report No. 16).  
Madison: University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Center for Education Research.

# Concept Definition Map



Adapted from: Schwartz, R.M. (1988). Learning to learn vocabulary in content area textbooks. *Journal of Reading*, 32, 108-118.

## Types of Context Clues

Type of Clue	Explanation
Definition	The word is defined directly in the sentence.
Description	The word is described by information in the context so that the reader can figure out the meaning.
Synonym	A word that is similar to the word is provided.
Comparison	The word is compared with other examples that are similar.
Contrast	The word is contrasted with another word, usually an antonym.
Example	A word or words that are examples are provided.

*Identify the type of context clue:*

Water soaks into the ground pores, or spaces, among the fragments of soil.

It was a **triptych**, or three-paneled, painting.

Light enters your eye through a **pupil**, which is like a small hole.

**Cumulus** clouds look like a pile of cotton balls.

**Pollination** occurs when a pollen grain from a male plant lands on the stigma of a female plant.

Cities were filling with immigrants and newcomers from American farms and small towns. Too poor to rent their own apartments, they shared rooms and crammed together in **tenements**.

An example of **mutualism** is the pea crab and the mussel. Tiny pea crabs live inside mussel shells. The crabs eat the young of organisms that would harm the mussels if they grew to adults inside the shell. In return, the mussels provide protection for the little crabs.

The children could tell, from Phil's statement about everything and everybody having a good side, that he was an **optimist**.

The nation was undergoing **urbanization** – the movement of people into cities.

One result of this motion is **diffusion**, the net movement of the particles of a substance from where they are more concentrated to where they are less concentrated.

Unlike a **compound**, an **element** cannot be broken down into simpler materials.

Volunteering to join the army offers the choice that a **draftee** does not have.

in the right column are applicable for every word (e.g., having an antonym or illustration). In those cases, students can enter NA for not applicable.

Figure D

### Two-Column Notes Template

word	Definition: Part of speech: Synonym: Antonym: Category/related words: Example: Nonexample: Multiple meanings: Sentence: Illustration:
------	--

Here is an example of how the two-column template can be used for the vocabulary words *lexicon*, *migrate*, and *nautical*.

lexicon	Definition: <i>a language user's knowledge of words</i> Part of speech: <i>noun</i> Synonym: <i>dictionary, glossary</i> Antonym: <i>NA</i> Category/related words: <i>vocabulary, words, definition, meaning</i> Example: <i>The words I use to speak.</i> Nonexample: <i>NA</i> Multiple meanings: <i>inventory or record</i> Sentence: <i>Because the boy read every night, he developed a large lexicon and knew more words than most of his friends.</i> Illustration:
---------	--



## Two-Column Notes Template

<hr/>	<p>Definition:</p> <p>Part of speech:</p> <p>Synonym:</p> <p>Antonym:</p> <p>Category/related words:</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>Non-example:</p> <p>Multiple meanings:</p> <p>Sentence:</p> <p>Illustration:</p>
<hr/>	<p>Definition:</p> <p>Part of speech:</p> <p>Synonym:</p> <p>Antonym:</p> <p>Category/related words:</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>Non-example:</p> <p>Multiple meanings:</p> <p>Sentence:</p> <p>Illustration:</p>

*Step 3 - Select Specific Words to Teach In-Depth*

**Activity 2: Practice Teaching a Word In-Depth**

*Directions: Work with a partner. Choose one of the words you selected in Activity 1. Use the Frayer Method, a Concept Definition Map, or the Two-Column Notes Template to teach the word to your partner.*



## Activity 1: Practice Using the Context

### Part 1

*Directions: Using a sample of your content classroom reading material, skim to find examples where the context can be used to help determine the meaning of the word. Try to identify which type of context clue was provided.*

Words	Page Number	Type of Clue

### Part 2

*Directions: Develop a mini-lesson plan that uses these examples to model and explicitly teach context clues.*


## Step 5: Promote Word Consciousness

Developing word consciousness means helping students become interested in words on both a cognitive and an emotional level (Anderson & Nagy, 1992). Word conscious teachers share their enjoyment of learning new words and believe that students can learn how to enjoy the study of words. A word conscious classroom is full of unusual, interesting new words. Word consciousness also includes playing with words to make jokes, puns, word riddles, and tongue twisters (Lehr et al., 2004). Graves (2006) describes word consciousness as having an interest in learning and using new words, and becoming more skillful and precise in word usage. He points out that promoting word consciousness is an essential way to motivate some students to read and build their vocabularies.

### Creating a Word-Rich Classroom

Beck, McKeown and Kucan (2002, 2004) suggest that a key ingredient to successful vocabulary instruction is a teacher who is an active, enthusiastic vocabulary learner:

The teacher should be a partner in word awareness and discovering new words and new uses for words. The teacher can tempt students with words by giving them a new word to find out about or dropping clues to a word's meaning in creative ways.... Frequent impromptu attention to vocabulary can help instill in students a feeling of the power of words and the value of knowing words (p. 26).

They call this "enriching the verbal environment." This includes creating classroom conversations where words are valued as interesting and important, and classrooms that are "rife with words." They offer these suggestions for promoting word consciousness:

- Instruct students to keep a record of words they have learned, perhaps in the form of a personal word journal, or on a classroom bulletin board.
- Encourage students to make connections with new words outside the classroom. Challenge students to find words outside of class in books, newspapers, or on radio and television. When students find a word and share how the word was used, record it on a large chart in the classroom. For older students, finding words outside of class can be required or for extra credit.
- Use mature language and sophisticated words when talking to students and replace simple terms with more precise ones. Teachers should not avoid using difficult words because they think students might not understand. In this way, teachers become models for how unique words can be used.
- Ask students to identify or create a situation that can be described by a new vocabulary word. This can be done individually or in small cooperative groups.
- Create a suggestion box for students to place possible words for expanding the classroom word pool.
- Share with students your favorite words, how you recently learned a new word, or how you had a misunderstanding about a new word.

### Step 5 - The Key Vocabulary Routine

- Use current events as a source for interesting words.
- Provide resources in the classroom for learning about new words, including a user-friendly dictionary and thesaurus.
- Find opportunities to make connections between words that share the same roots, prefixes, or suffixes, and generate a word family derived from a new word.

### Word Play

Blachowicz and Fisher (2004) note that research supports using word play in the classroom. Word play is motivating for word learning, causes students to reflect on words and be active learners, and is critical to the development of word awareness. Graves (2006) describes word play in this way:

Words and phrases can simultaneously feel good on the tongue, sound good to the ear, and incite a riot of laughter in the belly. Verbal phenomena such as homophones and homographs; idioms, clichés, and puns; and onomastics (the story of names) offer myriad opportunities for investigating language (p. 123).

The term logology is used to refer to all forms of word and language play with the English language (Johnson et al., 2004).

### Tips for Word Play

There are numerous books available at the library or in bookstores that can be used for word play in the classroom. Another resource for word play material is the internet. Websites abound with free games, lesson plans, and classroom activities. Here are a few suggestions:

- 50 Coolest Online Tools for Word Nerds: <http://www.onlineuniversities.com/blog/2010/05/50-coolest-online-tools-for-word-nerds/>
- A Word A Day: <http://www.wordsmith.org/>
- My Vocabulary.com: <http://www.myvocabulary.com/>
- Wordle: <http://www.wordle.net/>

The following search terms can also be used to find word play material:

- Homophones (words that have the same sound but different spelling) and homographs (words that have the same spelling but different meanings)
- Pun (a play on words or on different senses of the same word. Also, the similar sense or sound of different words)
- Word jokes and riddles
- Word category games (e.g., *Scattergories*, *Outburst*)
- Word picture games (e.g., *Pictionary*)
- Acting out word games (e.g., *Charades*)
- Synonym games (e.g., *Password*)

- Word learning games (e.g., *Scrabble*, *Boggle*)
- Word manipulations such as anagrams and palindromes
- Word expressions such as idioms, proverbs, and slang

### Etymology

Etymology is the origin and historic development of a word. Discovering the earliest known use of a word, its changes in form and meaning, and its transmission from one language to another can be fascinating. There is a free online etymology dictionary available at [www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com).

### Onomastics

Onomastics is the study of the origin and form of names. Johnson et al. (2004) have written a full book chapter about the different types of word play associated with names. They recommend the following books devoted to wordplay: *Names and Games* by R. Eckler (1986); *What's in a Name?* by P. Dickson (1996); and *The Dictionary of Word Play* by D. Morice (2001).

### Word Walls

A word wall is an area on a blackboard, bulletin board, or wall space that is devoted to visually displaying words. While word walls are often used to support phonics concepts and spelling, they are also an excellent way to promote word consciousness in the classroom and develop vocabulary knowledge. The key to getting the most out of word walls is to use them often and update them frequently.

Content words to be taught in depth are excellent candidates for a word wall. Because these words are on display, teachers are more likely to refer to them often and they will be better remembered by students.

There are a number of games and activities that can be used with word walls. Here are some recommended resources for ideas for planning word wall lessons:

- Education World - Word Wall Resource Page: [http://www.education-world.com/a\\_lesson/lesson/lesson328b.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson328b.shtml)
- Teachnet.com - Interactive Word Wall: <http://www.teachnet.com/lesson/langarts/wordwallo62599.html>
- Florida Department of Education and Just Read, Florida - Word Wall Reading Strategy of the Month: <http://forpd.ucf.edu/strategies/stratwordwalls.html>

### Classroom Reading Materials

In Chapter 2, it was noted that wide reading is a primary way for students to acquire new vocabulary. The amount students read is strongly related to their vocabulary knowledge. Nagy et al. (1987) estimate that from 25 to 50 percent of annual vocabulary growth can be attributed to incidental learning from context while reading. A word conscious classroom should have a wide variety of books and other material available about many different topics. This reading material will be the source for encountering new words.